

To the Reverend
Dr. SHERLOCK,
 Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge,
 A N D
 Master of the Temple.

Reverend Sir,

I Have been induc'd to address this Discourse to You, from the Subject-Matter of it; from a Desire of shewing my self Grateful; and from the greatest personal Esteem I am capable of entertaining.

The Subject upon which I here presume to offer You my Thoughts, whether the Design of it in general be consider'd, or the particular Occasion of applying it, is very noble and important. But for that Reason it may be thought the more assuming in me, to publish a Discourse, wherein there are so many Defects; and at the same time to lay it before a

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Person whose Discourses from the Pulpit have all of them, all the Beauty and Strength, that correct easy Language, and strict Reasoning can give them.

There are, I hope, few Persons capable of entertaining a Suspicion, as if the expressing a due Regard to the Memory of the late QUEEN, had any secret Design in it injurious to the Honour of Her Successor. Could there be any Foundation for such a Surmise, it would very ill become one, who owes his Dependance to the Favour of the Government, to render himself obnoxious on that Account.

Prejudices of this kind, if it be not Criminal even to suppose them, are, I conceive, of no real Service to the Publick. But I do not know, whether the Grounds of them are any where better, or more effectually remov'd, than in an Excellent Sermon before the House of Commons, on the last Anniversary of Queen ANNE's Accession: In which all the Fidelity and Honour owing to Her Majesty were indeed recommended after the most eloquent Manner, but withal the most just and honorary to the Succession.

Sir,

A further Design of this Address is to acknowledge the many Favours I have had the Honour to receive from You, which tho' of themselves very considerable, had something so particularly engaging in the manner of them,

as

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as will ever leave the strongest Impressions of Gratitude upon me.

I reckon among Your Favours the Advice, which I have so frequently had occasion to request, and sometimes in Cases of greater Difficulty, that gave me an Opportunity of observing with more Attention, a Readiness, a Force, and Extent of Thought, which are not often to be found separately, in equal Perfection.

Sir,

It is no wonder if the Esteem, which I had invincibly entertain'd upon the first Occasion of my being known to You, and previously to so many Obligations, should be still heighten'd by the Reflection of what I owe, and I ought to add, what my Family owes, upon a distinct Consideration, to them.

To say what I am inclin'd, and with great Justice should be allow'd to say concerning Your many excellent Qualities, would be offensive to that in particular, which by shading them, gives a better Grace and Comeliness to all the rest. You are plac'd in a Light, which discovers You to the greatest Advantage, and wherein none but Persons of the brightest Character, and the greatest Talents ought to be plac'd. To say nothing of the Eminent and Honourable Post which You so deservedly fill, in one of the most celebrated Seats of Learning; I do not know any Character in the Church, or out of it, that seems to require a finer or stron-

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ger Capacity, than that of Master of the Temple.

How well you have supported that Character, is acknowledg'd by one of the most judicious and awful Auditories in the World; and which is compos'd of a great Number of Persons, not only Learn'd in their proper Profession, but in all the more elegant and polite Parts of Learning. I shall only add, that in this Station, You have succeeded with Applause one of the best Preachers, and were it not that Comparisons are invidious, I might be allow'd to say, the Happiest and most moving practical Writer, that the Age he liv'd in, produc'd. One known and admirable Instance of what I observe, is his Book upon Death; and it may be affirm'd, without the Testimony of an Apparition from the Dead, to be the most perfect that was ever seen, or perhaps ever will be seen in its kind.



I am,

Sir,

Your most Obedient,

most Humble, and

Oblig'd Servant,

RIC. FIDDES.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd on the Death of
Her late M A J E S T Y
Queen A N N E.

ISAIAH lvij. 3.

*The Righteous perisheth, and no Man layeth it
to Heart.*

THE Words are not to be taken in too strict and restrain'd a Sense; but according to a Latitude, necessary towards explaining the Prophetical Writings, which abound with bold Figures, and frequently in the hyperbolical Strain. Thus in particular our Saviour complains, by the Prophet (*Chap. l. 2.*) that when he should come and preach the Gospel to the Jews, none of them would receive him, or his Doctrine. *Wherefore, when I came, was there no Man. When I call'd, was there none to answer.* That is none in Comparison of what might have been expected. *But to as many as receiv'd*
A 4 *him,*

him, saith the Evangelist, *to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name,* John i. 12.

What we are therefore to understand by the Words of the Text, and all I would be thought to intend by them, is, that either Men in general do not consider as they ought the Reasons of Providence, in the Death of righteous Persons; or if they do, are not however careful to improve this Consideration to the proper Ends and Uses of it. The Expression in the Text, of *laying to Heart* will justify my insisting on both these Senses; I shall therefore directly proceed to shew, that the Death of righteous Persons, or of any Person eminently Righteous, affords us very proper and useful Matter,

First, Of pious Reflections on the Providence of God. And,

Secondly, Of Humiliation for our Sins.

1st, Of pious Reflections on the Providence of God.

The Operations of that great and glorious Majesty, whose *Work is perfect, and all whose Ways are Judgment*, must at once be the most Noble, and the most necessary Subject, about which our Thoughts can be employ'd: It is impossible for us indeed to contemplate them with Attention, and, for any time, but we shall find the Heart mov'd and penetrated, and our Practise in some Measure at least influenced thereby. All the Actions of God bear the Character of his Attributes: He can do nothing



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thing that is *inconsiderable*. But there is something in the Death of righteous Persons, that deserves our special Consideration, upon these Two Accounts.

1. As such Persons are the more peculiar Charge of Providence.

2. As there is something peculiarly design'd by Providence, in their Death, to convince us of the Vanity of the World, and the precarious State of all Things here below.

1. Righteous Persons being the more peculiar Charge of Providence, the providential Dispensations of God towards them, do apparently, for that Reason, deserve to be more especially consider'd. That God takes care of those, who are careful to please him; that he has a Favour unto them, and which comprehends all their Interests in one Word, that he *loves* them, is confirm'd by many Declarations in Scripture. But had we no Revelation to this End, that Maxim of Holy David (Psal. cxlvi. 8.) *The Lord loveth the Righteous*; seems to flow with great Evidence from the Reason of the Thing, and the eternal Rectitude of his own Nature.

But above all, we are more particularly to observe the Motions of Providence, when any Event, wherewith a righteous Person is affected, has relation to the publick Interests of Mankind; whether consider'd in a religious or a civil Capacity. It being the great End of Providence to Conduct, and direct all Events towards the Good of Mankind in both these Respects, but especially the later of them; as the

the principal Design of God, the Design most worthy of his eternal *Power and Godhead*, is to advance the Kingdom of his Son *Jesus Christ*. A Kingdom which shall last for ever, and when all the Kingdoms of the Earth shall be destroy'd.

But what I would observe is, that a good Man, whatever his Condition in the World may be, is capable of rendring himself, in one Degree or other, subservient to both these Ends of Providence. Even in the lowest Sphere of Life, he may, by a good and pious Example, dispense a benign Influence. Society is compos'd of Particulars, and where 'tis well constituted, always makes a regular Body; the Members whereof, tho' like those of a human Body, they are severally appointed to more noble or lower Offices; yet have all of them their Use, and contribute in Proportion to the Support and Order, the Strength and Beauty of the whole.

But when righteous Persons are plac'd at the Head of this Body, whether, I say, Religious or Civil, they have still a wider Scope for the Influence both of their Example, and their Authority. Their Example indeed carries so great Authority with it, that it is often found of more Force to persuade, than their *Laws*, or those of God himself, to oblige. For we ever love to flatter our Pride, and are naturally more averse to put our selves in a State of Subjection, than to follow our own Inclinations, and embrace what we find some Beauty in that Charms us.

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Now what is more lovely and attractive, than Virtue, *as it were*, alive and in Motion? She is beautiful in the *Theory*, to those very Men who do not pretend to her Service; nay those, who endeavour by their Practice to bring a Reproach upon her, are yet willing to pay her the Duty of an inward and *simple* Esteem, and on many Occasions, where their private Passions and Interests are not concern'd, to offer her some slight Sacrifice. It may be question'd, whether the Devils themselves have not abstractedly consider'd, a secret Value and Esteem for her. There must be suppos'd some kind of Order among among them, as among the most abandon'd of human Race, Thieves and Robbers. And Virtue is nothing but *Order* in Perfection, and in all the Measures and Circumstances of it.

But how lovely soever Virtue is in the Idea, she is much more engaging, when exemplify'd in human Life and Conversation: Especially when she is seen, if I may so speak, in her Ascendant, and set off with all the Advantages of an External Lustre and Dignity. For this is a sensible Argument of her Power and Excellency, and in this imperfect State, where Men so little accustom themselves to abstract Reasoning, and are so seldom capable of it, no Arguments operate so powerfully upon them, as those which come before the Senses.

It has therefore been observ'd, that the Example of the Prince has ever had the greatest Power towards corrupting or reforming the People. Some Princes indeed have been so servilely imitated, that even their bodily Deformities have been drawn into Fashion: And to
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affect the Loss of an Eye, or a wry Neck, has been thought at least very becoming the Complacency of a Court.

But as Men are generally more concern'd for what relates to the Advantages of the Body, than those of the Mind, the moral Defects of Princes have been much more spreading and contagious, than their Natural. As on the other Hand, where any Prince has been distinguish'd by an exemplary Virtue and Piety, the Example has seldom fail'd of discovering very good and wholsome Effects.

When therefore Princes superior in all those good Qualities, which are the proper Beauties and Ornaments of human Nature, are taken away from us, and whose Example was of so great and general Influence towards the Suppression of Vice, and Encouragement of Virtue: This, I say, is a proper Occasion of Inquiry, so far as they are in any Measure discoverable to us, into the wise Reasons of Providence; or where we are less capable of entring distinctly upon them, of doing Honour to the sovereign Power and Dominion of God. *Who doth according to his Will in the Army of the Heavens, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth.—Who giveth and taketh away; who bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up.—And who sealeth up the Hand of every Man, to the End, that all Men may know his Work,* Job xxxvij. 7.

2. There is something also peculiar in the Death of righteous Persons, to convince us of the Vanity of the World, and the precarious State of all Things here below. Had God design'd this World for the Scene of our Happiness, and were it really good for us to be here,
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he would have built these Tabernacles of our Body of more strong and lasting Materials. He would not so soon remove the peculiar Objects of his Favour and Love, from the Place of their Habitation, sometimes in the Flower, at other times in the Strength or first decline of Age, and that too, in the several Instances, by sudden Death. If a Death may be call'd sudden, which there has been a strict and regular Care taken to prevent the Surprize of; much less would God take away the Righteous, and at the same time seem to withdraw the usual Influences of his Love in the very Circumstances of their Death; as in those of our Blessed Saviour himself, by inflicting grievous and tormenting Pains: Pains which he alone can strengthen with Patience to undergo; and which therefore, in Proportion as they are patiently sustain'd, discover the Effects of his more immediate Presence and Support.

Yet to shew us of how little Importance a longer Term of Life, or the easy Circumstances either of Life or Death are to our true Happiness, the Providence of God, as to these Things, makes no visible Discrimination between the Righteous and the Wicked, but they grow up like *the Wheat and the Tares*, promiscuously together, and are cut down after an undistinguish'd Manner.

Long Life, 'tis true, tho' in the natural Order of Things, the Privilege of Virtue and Piety, yet has in Scripture the express Sanction of a Promise; and this Promise is always made good, where wise and superior Reasons of Providence do not over-rule. But where the Ends of his Providence cannot otherways
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be attain'd, God has reserv'd to himself an equitable Right of dispensing with the Letter of his Promise. Tho' it must be granted we have never more Reason, than sometimes on this very Occasion, to cry out with the Apostle. *O! the Depth of the Riches, both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments; and his Ways past finding out? For who hath known the Mind of the Lord; or who hath been his Counsellor?* Rom. xi. 33, 34.

There is indeed one Place of Scripture which seems to imply, as if it were inconsistent with the Justice of God, to subject the Good and the Wicked, to the same common Strokes of Mortality; and to make no visible Distinction in the Manner or Circumstances of their Death between them. For upon God's declaring to *Abraham* his Design of destroying *Sodom*, with all its Inhabitants; the Patriarch thus expostulates with him. *That be far from thee, to do after this Manner, to slay the Righteous with the Wicked: And that the Righteous should be as the Wicked; that be far from thee; shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?* Gen. xvij. 25.

As if he had argued; is not such a Method of Proceeding contrary to all the known Rules we have of distributive Justice? And does it not seem to flow from the Decrees of a Power wholly Arbitrary and Despotick, without any regard to Right or Wrong? And this indeed had been an invincible Argument, supposing any good Foundation for it, against such a Proceeding; for a Power that is not regulated by the Measures of what is Just, cannot be the Power either of a just, or of a wise and good God.

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Interpreters have found some Difficulty in accounting for this Passage; and the more, because *Abraham's* Argument seems to lie against known and acknowledg'd Facts. *Job* in Admiration of this ordinary Effect of Providence, expresses himself as if there were something notwithstanding very extraordinary and considerable in it. *This is one thing, therefore I said it, he destroyeth the Perfect, with the Wicked, Job ix. 22.*

Some therefore have thought, that in the Judgment of *Abraham*, God could not with the Safety of his Justice destroy the Righteous, that were in *Sodom*; because they were the Promises of Temporal Blessings, which at that time chiefly influenc'd the Piety and Religion of Men. But this is said precariously, and without any certain Grounds. It does not follow, that because under the Law so many temporal Advantages were promis'd to good Men, therefore good Men had a federal Right to them, before the Law was deliver'd.

Others have thought the Force of *Abraham's* Argument lay here; that God could not justly destroy the Righteous that were in *Sodom*, because this would have given too great and visible Discouragement to the Piety of Men. But this Argument rather affects the Wisdom and Holiness of God, than his Justice: Or if his Justice may be suppos'd indirectly affected with it; the Foundation however upon which it proceeds, is false; for it supposes that this World is the proper State of Rewards and Punishments to Men, and not only of Discipline or Probation.

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But I humbly take the Meaning of the Words to be, " Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do the common Office of a Judge (*i. Postheis* *κείνῳ*) in making merciful Allowances to those, who are less Criminal, if not altogether Innocent. Now tho' Acts of strict Justice may not be suppos'd Arbitrary and Free, yet Acts of Goodness and Mercy always are. And it was very pious and reasonable in *Abraham* to expostulate with God concerning those Attributes, whereby he chiefly delights to distinguish himself. *Abraham*, I say, might with great Reason and Piety move a good and merciful Judge to spare the Righteous that were in *Sodom*, and the Wicked themselves for the sake of the Righteous; but he could not suppose that the Judge of all the Earth was oblig'd in strict Justice to do either.

But whether God may at any time out of his great Goodness and Mercy spare the Wicked here for the sake of the Righteous; yet if this World were intended for a State of Reward or Happiness to the Righteous, we may piously infer, he would grant them at least a much longer and happier Term of Life in it, both for their own Sake, and that of other righteous Persons.

For one of the greatest Blessings of human Life, lies in the Conversation and Society of good Men: without this one Blessing, how tasteless and insipid would all other temporal Enjoyments be? I do not know whether it be possible to frame a Notion of Hell more horrid or frightful, than that of a World, wherein none
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but wicked and unrighteous Men should be suffer'd to live.

Notwithstanding the Endeavours of good Men to reclaim Sinners by all proper Methods of Instruction, and the Power of their Example to soften vicious and perverse Tempers: Yet how great Reason have we to complain? That *Iniquity does still abound, and the Love of many wax Cold.* What a Spirit of Rancour and Malice, of evil Speaking and every evil Work, have we known abroad in the World? To what ill Usage are good Men sometimes expos'd, and for no other Reason, but because of their *good* Qualities: Or when it is the Interest or Inclination of a Party, that Persons of the greatest Merit, even in a publick Capacity, should be ill thought of, or hunted down, how does common Fame disguise and transform them in a Moment?

These Disorders are too frequent in the World; tho' there are, blessed be God, great Numbers of Men, who have both Religion and good Sense; and are not wanting in the common Offices of Humanity and good Nature. But yet in Proportion, as the Number of righteous Persons is diminish'd, the Corruptions that are in the World thro' Lust, gather Strength, and spread so much the wider.

These Reflections naturally arise upon the Death of good Men, in every State and Condition of Life; tho' they are still more affecting, when Persons of distinguish'd Piety move in a higher Sphere. But when righteous Princes, who have had nothing so much at Heart, as the true Interests of Religion, and the State, when those who are call'd Gods, by reason of

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the Power and Authority they derive from the true and living God, are seen to dye like Men! When the great Luminaries of the moral World are extinguish'd; or to speak in the Prophetical Language, when the Stars of Heaven, and the Constellations thereof cease to give their Light! Such a dark and melancholy State of Things, is proper to remind us of the Vanity of the World in a more awakening Manner, and to fill the Mind with mournful and solemn Apprehensions; not as if some great Funeral Apartment, but the whole World about us were hung were *Sable*. But,

Secondly, The Death of righteous Persons is proper to teach us the Duty of Humiliation for our Sins.

There is something very grave and solemn, and which cannot fail of humbling considerate Persons in the very Thoughts of Death. To *Die*, is to act the last Part towards that mighty Change, upon which an Eternity of Happiness or Misery depends. The proper Business of a dying Person is therefore to consider, that his Soul is now requir'd of him; and how he shall be able to render an Account of all his Thoughts, Words and Actions, at the Tribunal of that all-knowing, all-powerful and just God; before whom he is preparing immediately to appear. And this indeed is a Consideration of such infinite Weight, that even the best of Men, under the visible Approach of Death, and whose Hopes are full of *Immortality*, yet in recommending their Souls into the Hands of

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of a merciful God, are sometimes observ'd to *rejoyce with Trembling.*

The Theory of Death naturally leads to these, or the like Reflections; and they are all very proper to humble us in the Sight of God for our Sins, that when it is our time of preparing to meet him; which cannot be very far from any of us: The Testimony of a good Conscience may give us greater Assurance, and *Boldness of Access*, in that Day, towards him.

But these Considerations are proper in particular to humble *the Pride of Life*; and take us down in our Thoughts of what we here call Power and Greatness; seeing the greatest *Goodness*, in full Possession of them, can receive from them, at that Exigence, no Relief or Protection; nor indeed any Comfort, but what arises from the Reflection of having employ'd them to good, pious and useful Ends.

But what I principally intend is, that the Death of any Person eminently Righteous, and in an eminent Station, is a proper Occasion of humbling us, consider'd under the Notion of a Judgment. Good Princes, to pursue the main Scope of my Discourse, are the greatest Blessings to Mankind upon Earth. They are so in the natural Order and Effects of their Administration. As the Rights of publick Communities, and private Persons are hereby secur'd, Arts and Sciences encourag'd; and above all, the Interests of Religion taken Care of, and promoted. Of Religion, which lays the surest Foundation for *the Stability of the Times*, as our Prophet expresses it, (*Chap. xxxiiij. 5.*) and in all Respects, for the Happiness and Prosperity

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of any People; So that had we no Revelation to confirm it to us, it seems to be a Maxim flowing from the visible and direct Tendency of Things, That *Righteousness exalteth a Nation.*

But good Princes are still greater Blessings to a Nation on a *Providential* Account. As their Hearts are in the Hand of God, and he is with them in all their Designs, Resolutions and Actions; as he presides in their Counsels, goes forth with their Fleets and Armies; fights their Battles; gives them the Victory and the Spirit of Wisdom to improve it. Towards which great Ends, without his Superintendence and Direction, all the Precaution and Schemes, all the Bravery and Strength, the Address and Penetration of Men, would be of no Significancy.

In a State of War particularly, Generals have always thought it necessary to possess the Armies they Commanded with a Belief, that the Dispositions of Providence were favourable to them. And where there was no reasonable Foundation for such a Belief, have frequently made use of little Artifices, in order to persuade to it.

Alexander the Great, tho' no Prince affected more to Conquer by Dint of Sword, yet did not disdain upon Occasion to employ a pious Fraud. In passing the River *Granicus*, observing his Men to be seiz'd with a superstitious Fear, from the Name of the Mouth, which was thought unfortunate to them, he privately gave Directions to *Aristander*, his Soothsayer in Chief, that he should write with a certain Liquor on the Liver of the Victim, *The Gods have granted Alexander the Victory*; This fir'd his Men with
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a new Ardor, and they were easily persuaded to push a Conquest, which Heaven had already proclaim'd. Again, a little before the Battle of *Arbela*, when an Eclipse of the Moon had put his Men into so great Consternation, that they began out of mere Religion to Mutiny; This Hero observing, that there was no other way of recovering them out of the Disorder, but by driving one Superstition with another, he procur'd the *Egyptian* Astrologers, in great Reputation at that time for expounding Omens, to give out; That the *Greeks* were under the Protection of the Sun, but the *Persians* of the Moon. And that an Eclipse of this Planet, always portended some signal Calamity or Disgrace to the *Persians*. By this Artifice *Alexander* soon compos'd the Spirits of his Men, and restor'd a new Face of Things in the Army.

I only mention these two Stories among many others, for the Moral of them; which is to shew of how great Force even the Belief of God's special Favour and Protection is to any Nation or People; But that good Princes, *Princes just, and ruling in the Fear of God*, give the People committed to their Charge, auspicious and real Grounds for such a Belief.

When therefore God deprives a Nation of so great Blessings, and upon whom their Hopes of Success were so piously founded; This is to be consider'd by them, as a publick and providential Judgment; but from which they have still much less to apprehend; when righteous Princes are succeeded by those, who have form'd a Resolution of pursuing the same Paths of

Righteousness, and of inviolably maintaining the Interests both of Religion and the State.

Now the End of God's visiting the World with any publick Calamity, is to render Men more sensible, that they have provok'd him by their Sins; but that he will not *always* be provok'd; that this is the proper Season therefore of their humbling themselves before him; of *turning unto him, that smiteth them, and seeking the Lord of Hosts, Isa. ix. 12, 13.*

It is the greatest Argument at once of Stupidity of Mind and Obduracy of Heart, when God hath smitten, and Men have not grieved; it is adding to their Crimes the highest Aggravation they are capable of, that of *Contumacy*. Especially after Sinners have long and publickly provok'd the Displeasure of Almighty God, the last Thing they seem capable of, in order to fill up the Measure of their Sins, is to *despise his Chastnings*.

What therefore we in particular, of this Kingdom, have incumbent on us, under a Sense of our common and late Calamity, in the Death of a most Excellent and Righteous QUEEN, is without delay, to *break off our Sins by Righteousness*; and as the Prophet *Jeremiah* exhorts, to *return, now, every one from his evil Way; and to make his Ways and his Doings good, Chap. xviii. 11.*

These are the most proper Measures we can enter upon, in order long to avert the like Judgment of God from us; and to prevent our incurring that severe Commination by *Solomon, Prov. xxviii. 2. For the Transgression of a Land many are the Princes thereof.* May we rather by a general and sincere Reformation intitule our selves

selves to the Blessing promis'd in the latter part of the Verse, which we have, thank God, so bright and happy a Prospect of, That, *by a Man of Understanding and Knowledge, shall the State of a Land, be prolong'd.*

I have explain'd the Text, and recommended some of the proper Duties both of Reflection and Humiliation, arising from the Scope of it: And I doubt not but every one here present, has already made particular Application of what has been said, with respect to the Death of righteous Persons, and righteous Princes in general. But on occasion of the Death of Queen ANNE, and for which Her late Interment, amidst all our joyful Expectations, has given us fresh Impressions of Sorrow; I desire, how unequal soever to the Subject, to say something more particularly, in a short Essay upon Her Character, as solely comprehending that of a righteous Prince. For to consider it at large, and in all the Lights of it, were I capable of such a View, would carry me far beyond my present Bounds.

Righteousness, comprehends under it, the three general Duties of Justice, Piety, and Charity. Our late Excellent Sovereign distinguish'd her self eminently, and after a most exemplary manner, in all these respects.

1. It must be acknowledg'd indeed, that Princes have sometimes just Reasons for their Conduct, which it is impossible for those, who do not know the secret Springs of Action, to make a true Judgment of; infinite Emergencies, upon occasion of what is transacted in foreign Courts or their Own, and which ought not, in many

Cases, to be made Publick, may justify several Measures, which the People in general cannot, upon Sight, fully account for.

It is an Honour therefore, we owe to the Prince, where Evidence does not oblige us to the contrary, to acquiesce in his Conduct, as proceeding upon Reasons both of *Justice* and *Wisdom*; otherwise we judge, which we should never do, in any Case whatever, without Light; or rather, we do not follow the Light, which should guide us, but put our selves before it. We should therefore consider the particular Motives of Justice, upon which the Sovereign Power acts, among the *Arcana Imperii*, those Secrets of Government, which yet if we may be permitted, at a distance, to enquire into, we should express a Caution and Reverence in our Inquiries, due to Things Sacred; which I take to be the Design of that judicious Expostulation of *Elihu*, Job xxxiv. 17. *Is it fit to say to a King, Thou art wicked? or to Princes, Ye are ungodly?*

But there are other Reasons of Justice in the Conduct of Princes, which fall more under private Cognizance and Observation. And in all these the late Queen, of blessed Memory, was a very bright and illustrious Precedent; She made the Laws agreeable to the Trust repos'd in Her, the Rule and Measure of Her Administration. There was no one Instance of Her exerting an Arbitrary Act, throughout the whole Course of Her Reign, or of any thing like it. She consider'd Herself as God's Minister, and as a *Power* Ordain'd of God: But she could not have Govern'd with more regard to the Good and Interests of Her People, supposing Her Authority to have had no higher Foundation, than what
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some People would resolve all Civil Authority into, *the mere Ordinance of Man*. I shall be justify'd in what I am going to add, That She never, knowingly, employ'd Her Prerogative, but to such Ends, which discover'd we should have had nothing to fear from the Exercise of Her Power, had it really been Despotick.

She ratify'd a great many wholsom and good Laws; but because 'tis the Executive Power which puts Life into them, and makes them operate, she omitted no proper Occasion of recommending to Her subordinate Ministers, and especially to those, who had a Hand in the Legislature, the strict and faithful Execution of them. But of all the Laws enacted in Her Reign, none were more Salutary than one of those She gave Her last Sanction to, and so near to Her last Moments. As if God had design'd it a proper Preparative to Her entring into the *Communion of Saints* above, that She should then give the finishing Power to an Act so necessary to preserve the Unity of his Church, and to prevent those scandalous Disorders which visibly tend, by confirming them in their Prejudices, to hinder *Schismatics* from returning into the Bosom of it.

In dispensing of Rewards, She had always a regard to Merit, or what was represented to Her under that Notion. Where any Persons had eminently serv'd Her, their Country, or the Church, She was rather inclin'd to exceed in Her Favours; and even to consider what was in them, Matter of strict and indispensible Duty, as laying a kind of honourable Debt; I had almost said, a Debt of *Gratitude* upon Her.

She

She was very cautious of misleading those, who had the Honour of addressing any Request to Her, into false Expectations; and never made a Promise, but She consider'd it as an Obligation. And herein She was so nicely tender, that where there was a manifest Failure in that Duty and Respect which, in the Reason of the Thing, gave a Dispensation from Her Promise, yet She could not, without great Difficulty, if at all, be persuaded to dispense, in it, with Her Self.

If there was any Act of distributive Justice, to which She was less prompt or inclin'd, it related to the Punishment of Delinquents; but proceeded from a Temper more agreeable to that of Heaven itself; more peculiar to the Clemency of Her Family; the Tenderness of Her Sex, and the Spirit of that Church, whereof She had liv'd and dy'd so great an Ornament; of that excellent Church, which She so faithfully *Confess'd* and Adher'd to in the Day of Tryal, and for whose Interests She was willing to forget *Her Father's House*, and to Sacrifice one of the most tender Passions of human Nature; But to the Impressions whereof, an uncommon *Piety* render'd Her still more sensible.

If in any of the respects here mention'd, there might possibly have been any Error in Her Administration, and what Administration is free from all Error? This ought not to be plac'd to Her own Account, but to the unhappy Circumstances which Princes, and almost all great Men in Power, are under; in being, after a manner, oblig'd, on many Occasions, to make wrong Judgments. For having no other way of Judg-
ing,

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ing, but by the Representations of those about them, which are not always the most candid and sincere; it is no wonder, if they sometimes be led into Mistakes, and particularly in conferring, or with-holding their Favours.

2. In all the Duties and Offices of Piety towards God, our late Excellent Sovereign, who is now with him, was no less Exemplary. The publick Monuments She has left us of Her Piety, and which are rising every Day still higher and higher, may possibly last till the World itself shall be no more. But Her Zeal for God's Honour, did not terminate in a provident Care for the publick Places of his Worship; it extended to those who should Minister in them: She contributed what She was able, to retrieve the Dignity of the Sacred Order, from that Poverty, under which it suffers so much; and which, indeed, is one of the greatest and most common Imputations that wicked and prophane Men find themselves capable of objecting to it.

In Her Devotions She discover'd a Fervor, which is proper to Persons truly Pious: And She was frequent in them, as the State of Her Health, or other justifiable Avocations would admit. It was Her Delight to come before the Lord, to keep his Sabbaths, and reverence his Sanctuary; and She never omitted any part of religious Sacrifice, where She had not a Dispensation for Reasons of *Mercy*, or some other moral Virtue, wherein to obey, was *better than Sacrifice*.

She

She seems to have form'd Her Conduct, in relation to Her Domesticks, upon the same noble and pious Resolution with that of *Joshua*, ch. xxiv. 15. *As for me, and my House, we will serve the Lord.* Her Family was a Family of Devotion, so far as Her Authority or Example, or a Distinction in conferring her Favours, could contribute to make it so.

Her Behaviour in the Service of God, was Humble, but Awful and Solemn; and such as testify'd an inward Sense of the Duty She was performing, and the Presence She was in. The Presence of that Great and All-glorious Being, who fills Heaven and Earth with his Majesty; and before whom, when we consider in the least, where we are, all the Ideas of sensible Pomp and Grandeur, must necessarily vanish. Her Piety to add no more was such, that the most Pious of those who Ministred to Her in Things pertaining to God, were profited by it.

3. Her Alms ascended no less continually up, as a Memorial before God, than Her Prayers. She knew that these were the Sacrifices where-with God was pleas'd, and for that reason, as well as from a natural Benignity of Mind, took the greatest Pleasure in them Her Self. For She was inclin'd to Acts of Beneficence, not merely as a Duty of positive Command, or as the Apostle significantly expresses it, *of Necessity*; but of Complacency and Chearfulness. She perfectly obey'd the Apostle's Charge, if She might be said to be charg'd with what She so freely made Her Choice, and was glad to Distribute, *willing to Communicate*, 1 Tim. vj. 18.

If

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If the publick Occasions or Her private Liberalities, might possibly, at any time, lay a Restraint on Her bountiful Inclinations, She would discover a Compassion worthy of a Temper truly Christian; and could not deny any thing, but after a manner more Obliging, than most Persons know how to confer a Favour. In a Word, She did not think the Dignity of a Crown exempted Her from the common Duties and Condescension of a Christian, *in considering the Poor*; but rather, suppos'd Her Self oblig'd, from the Height and Advantage of Her Station, to disperse more liberally abroad, and lay up for Her Self a good Foundation against the Time to come, that She might lay hold of *Eternal Life*.

I have only consider'd, and in a very imperfect manner, some of the Moral Duties, or rather Christian Graces, wherein the late Queen was so Eminent and Exemplary. I have said nothing of the many glorious Events of Her Reign, these are already the Subject of Volumes, and do not properly fall under the Notion of Moral Virtue: Except perhaps, in general, it ought to have been put to the Account of Her Piety, That, throughout the whole Course of Her Reign, She was attended with so surprizing Success and Felicity; and, That we all along enjoy'd the Blessings of Plenty; and even to appearance, those of Peace, during the Time of a most *Glorious, Consuming War*, which yet She was enabled, at last, to put a happy Period to; the Happier in this respect, that it visibly made way for the more easy and free Accession of our present Sovereign to the Throne.

But

But to conclude: Let us at length, lay aside all those intemperate Heats and Animosities, which neither become us as Men, as Christians, or good Subjects. Let us Unite in all Brotherly Love and Charity one towards another, and in all dutiful Subjection to the King whom Providence has set over us, and who comes with the most favourable Dispositions to meet a People, the most faithfully and unanimously dispos'd to receive him. But then let us Obey him out of a pure Principle of Religion, and for *Conscience-sake*. An Obedience which proceeds only from Private or Party-Regards, is not to be depended on: No Hold can be taken of Men, who act upon no Principle: We know not where to have such Men; and indeed they do not know themselves, any further than for the present Emergency, what they are, or wherewith they will be satisfy'd.

It must be granted, that the Subject of Government, in relation to the Measures of Obedience, is very nice; those who are for carrying them to the greatest Height, do not do it, in favour of Tyranny, which they abhor; but because there must be somewhere, of necessity, a last Resort of Power, and they can have no Idea of a Contradiction, or of any Authority Superior to the Supreme.

But take which side of the Question you please, it will be agreed on all Hands, that Obedience to the Prince, must be founded on some standing and conscientious Principle. To withhold or pay our Obedience, according as the State of Affairs may suit with our Schemes or Inclinations, is not really to obey the Prince, but to prescribe to him; and, in effect, to place our selves above him.

The



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The best Security therefore of our Obedience to the King, is to fear God and keep his Commandments; those Commandments in particular, which require Subjection to the higher Powers, as the Ordinance and Ministers of God. This is a Principle of Obedience, which does not vary with the uncertain Caprice of Men given to Change, but stands upon a firm unchangeable Foundation; and obliges us to be Obedient to him, who is our supreme *Master, according to the Flesh*, (It is the Apostle's Expression) *in singleness of Heart, as unto Christ. — with good Will, doing Service, as unto the Lord, and not unto Men.* Or in the Words of *St. Peter*, wherewith I shall conclude, *as Free, and not using our Liberty for a Cloak of Maliciousness, but as the Servants of God,* 1 Pet. ij. 16.

F I N I S.

on the Death of the QUEEN.

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him, who is our Supreme Authority, according to the
Word of God. (See the Apostle's Exposition) In a Church
of Christ, as was said, we are not to give
Honour, as unto Men: for we are to give it
in the Word of the Lord, as unto God.
Thus, as Free, we Liberty for a
Glorious Ministry.



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FINIS

THEOLOGIA SPECULATIVA:

OR, THE

FIRST PART

OF A

BODY

OF

DIVINITY

Under that TITLE.

Wherein are explain'd the

PRINCIPLES

OF

NATURAL and REVEAL'D

RELIGION.

By *RICHARD FIDDES*, B. D. Rector of *Halsham*,
and Chaplain to the Right Honourable *Robert* Earl of
Oxford, and Earl *Mortimer*.

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